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PRESS RELEASE
September 1, 2021

Japan Fair Trade Commission closes App Store investigation

Apple will let developers of "reader" apps around the world link to an external website to set up or manage an account beginning early next year



CUPERTINO, CALIFORNIA — Apple today announced an update coming to the App Store that closes an investigation by the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC). The update will allow developers of "reader" apps to include an in-app link to their website for users to set up or manage an account. While the agreement was made with the JFTC, Apple will apply this change globally to all reader apps on the store. Reader apps provide previously purchased content or content subscriptions for digital magazines, newspapers, books, audio, music, and video.

To ensure a safe and seamless user experience, the App Store's guidelines require developers to sell digital services and subscriptions using Apple's in-app payment system. Because developers of reader apps do not offer in-app digital goods and services for purchase, Apple agreed with the JFTC to let developers of these apps share a single link to their website to help users set up and manage their account.

Before the change goes into effect in early 2022, Apple will update its guidelines and review process to make sure users of reader apps continue to have a safe experience on the App Store. While in-app purchases through the App Store commerce system remain the safest and most trusted payment methods for users, Apple will also help developers of reader apps protect users when they link them to an external website to make purchases.

"Trust on the App Store is everything to us. The focus of the App Store is always to create a safe and secure experience for users, while helping them find and use great apps on the devices they love," said Phil Schiller, Apple Fellow who oversees the App Store. "We have great respect for the Japan Fair Trade Commission and appreciate the work we've done together, which will help developers of reader apps make it easier for users to set up and manage their apps and services, while protecting their privacy and maintaining their trust."

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This update follows a number of changes to the App Store announced last week, which give developers more flexibility and resources to reach their customers, tailor their price points, and grow their businesses. Last week, Apple also launched the News Partner Program to support local journalism and help news organizations on the App Store.

With the update announced today, the App Store continues to evolve to be an even better marketplace for users and developers alike. Already, Apple provides more than 30 million registered developers with all the tools, resources, and support they need to create and deliver software to over a billion customers around the world on Apple platforms.

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